

STATINTL

The SECOM members have been provided copies of the [redacted] TS classification proposals and will address it at 18 July meeting.

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You might brief [redacted] to expect a couple questions from members about the CIA position on the proposed classification and about whether CIA is doing anything about adopting them. If so what. The interest will stem more from a desire to learn what roll Office of Security plays in the determination of classification guides in CIA. Leading toward a decision whether SECOM should take a position on classification guides in general or whether SECOM should surrender interest to some other Community Group - and if so which one.

My opinion is that SECOM could not relinquish a roll completely but we might be able to get away without actually having to draft - "Community Classification Guides" in favor of playing a coordination roll.

27 JUN 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR:

[REDACTED]

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Special Assistant to the DCI

FROM:

Robert W. Gambino
Director of Security

SUBJECT:

Classification Category for Safe Combinations

REFERENCE:

Memo from SA/DCI, dated 29 May 1979,
subject: Security Task Force Recommendation
13--Revisited (ER 79-4182)

1. I have reviewed the entire matter dealing with the classification category for safe combinations and the related problems raised in your memorandum of 29 May 1979. I believe that the potential for "exceptionally grave damage" to the national security is self-evident should such information fall into hostile hands. The safe combinations collectively provide access to the entire range of classified information in the Agency. Individually, they have the potential for providing access to Top Secret information since vaults, secure areas and individual safes are all approved for the storage of such material.

2. Over and above my own views on the matter, the principle is explicitly established in the Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO) Directive Number 1, which provides implementation guidance for Executive Order 12065, effective 1 December 1978. Section F.5. of this Directive, titled "Combinations - a. Equipment in Service," provides that "Records of combinations shall be classified no lower than the highest level of classified information to be stored in the security equipment concerned." (underlining added for emphasis). This does not merely support our position -- it clearly prohibits doing otherwise.

3. The principle of classifying according to the potential, rather than actual, contents is not only clearly established in the ISOO Directive but in the very criteria

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proposed in the attachment to your memorandum. Note

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Top Secret information is to be classified Top Secret. Only a very small percentage of the communications actually carried on those circuits is Top Secret but the validity of taking the precaution to protect the entire system at the Top Secret level is taken for granted.

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a. Commencing with FY80, only employees possessing Top Secret staff-type clearances will be permitted to change or have access to combinations.

b. The assistance of the Office of Data Processing will be sought to provide a data processing solution to the Top Secret record and accountability aspects of the problem. We have, of course, always kept the collection of combinations under strict control, accessible only to a limited number of Top Secret-cleared personnel but what we are seeking is to computerize the lists so that the collection may be readily inventoried and be placed into the Top Secret Control System.

5. In view of the above, it is requested that the Top Secret classification category presently assigned to Agency safe combinations be retained as presented in section A9c2.5 of the DDA Classification Guide.

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Robert W. Gambino

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REMARKS

tells me that he has no more to do with this recommendation and suggest that the addressee of his 29 May memo do what he desires. His primary interest is on the adoption or rejection (whatever) of the proposed TS classification guide. As you know his interest stems from the fact that no matter what the outcome of APEX, there will be an increasing volume of intelligence removed from compartmentation. There is reasonable concern least all of it be routinely classified T.S. The Community couldn't live with results. With the extra tight definition the CIA group headed by proposed this contingency would be avoided.

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